Art History

Искусствоведение

UDC 372

Russian Image on the Federal Republic of Germany Screen*

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Abstract. This article analyzed the image of Russia in the screen mirror of the Federal Republic of Germany for: determine the place and role of the image of the USSR and the Russian and Soviet / Russian characters in the movies from the beginning of the postwar German ideological confrontation to 1991 (the collapse of the Soviet Union) as compared with the trends of the modern era (1992 – present); identify political, ideological, social and cultural contexts, the main stages of development, concepts, goals, objectives, authors of fiction films themes outlined above; classify and compare trends and stereotypes German films related to the Soviet / Russian theme: ideology, content model, genre modifications (including: socio-political analysis, stereotypes, ideological analysis, identification analysis, the iconographic analysis, narrative analysis, the characters etc.).

Keywords: cold war; Russian image; Federal Republic of Germany; screen; films.

Introduction

My article relies on research content approach (study of the process content with the whole complex of its elements, their interactions and character, reference to facts, analysis and synthesis of theoretical findings, etc.), on historical approach – study of concrete historical development of the claimed topic in the Federal Republic of Germany feature cinematograph. For this purpose I use both theoretical research methods (classification, comparison, analogy, induction and deduction, abstraction and concretization, theoretical analysis and synthesis, generalization) and empirical research methods (data acquisition connected with the research subject matter). The efficiency of such methods has been proved by western (R. Taylor, T. Shaw, D.J. Youngblood, A. Loughton, et al.) as well as Russian scholars (N. Zorkaya, E. Ivanyan, M. Turovskaya, A. Chubaryan, et al.).

* This article is the result of the research with the financial support of DAAD grant 2014 (Forschungs- und Arbeitsaufenthalte Ausländischer Hochschullehrer und Wissenschaftler Wiedereinladungen für ehemalige Stipendiaten / Study visits of foreign academic personnel to the Federal Republic of Germany).
It is well-known that the interpretation of media texts is changeable and subject to variations of political policies. After the peak of the ideological confrontation of the late Stalinism era and the peak of McCarthyism (1946-1953) when screen enemy images were full of mutual malicious grotesque, the Thaw period of the mid 1950s – the early 1960s turned the situation of the ideological confrontation in media production in the direction of a more verisimilar representation of a potential enemy. Both western and Russian scholars frequently noted that there were always enough excuses for ideological and media confrontation (Bernin-Maghit, 2008; Bozo et al, 2008; 2012; Clarke, 2006; Davidson and Sabine, 2009; Ginsberg and Kirsten, 1996; Ilman, 2005; Keen, 1986; LaFeber, 1990; Levering, 1982; Maguire, 2012; Manvell, 1971; Murray and Christopher, 1992; Pfleum, 1990; Rentschler, 1986; Robin, 1999; Rukavishnikov, 2000; Shaw and Youngblood, 2010; Shenin, 2003; Strada and Troper, 1997; Klimontovich, 1990; Kolesnikova, 2008; Turovskaya, 1993; 1996). But each of the opposing sides preferred to choose the most advantageous facts (in their favor) passing over black spots in silence. That explains the violent storm of angry accusations of bourgeois cinema vices as well as the western world in general which raged in Soviet scientific and journalistic literature devoted to the problem of the ideological struggle on the screen. At the same time, “propagandists possessed all the necessary premises and conditions for the creation of the information reality suitable for the USSR administration: experience, state monopoly on mass media and information itself, citizens’ confidence in the government and newspaper messages, a low level of political culture and literacy of some part of the population, traditional distrust of the West” (Fateyev, 1999).

It is true that one could often run across single-valued passages in the works of more liberal Soviet film critics meant for Soviet viewers who had never seen anti-Soviet films, and who had never attempted to reach the level of comparative analysis of media stereotypes on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

However, the evolution of Western film texts interpretations by Soviet and Russian critics is a subject for further research. In this article I will try to analyze the image of Russia through the Federal Republic of Germany feature films’ view.

The objectives of my research are:
- to define the place and role of the Russian image transformation topic in the Federal Republic of Germany cinematograph from 1946 (the beginning of the post-war ideological confrontation) to 1991 (the Soviet Union disintegration) versus the tendencies of the modern age (1992-present);
- the study of the political, ideological, social and cultural contexts, the principal development stages, concepts, aims, objectives, authors’ conceptions of my research topic interpretations on the Federal Republic of Germany screen;
- classification and comparative analysis of the Federal Republic of Germany films’ trends and stereotypes connected with the Russian image interpretation: ideology, content models, genre modifications (including: social and political analysis, stereotypes analysis, ideological analysis, representation analysis, identification analysis, iconographic analysis, narrative analysis, character analysis).

Analysis and the interpretation of the Federal Republic of Germany films connected with the Russian image interpretation and scientific literature about the research topic are very important. Because without those it is impossible to arrange, to systematize, to investigate contexts, basic stages, directions, purposes and tasks, contents, genre models, etc. of the development of the research theme.

I analyzed the image of Russia in the screen mirror of the Federal Republic of Germany for:
- determine the place and role of the image of the USSR and the Russian and Soviet/Russian characters in the movies from the beginning of the postwar German ideological confrontation to 1991 (the collapse of the Soviet Union) as compared with the trends of the modern era (1992-present);
- identify political, ideological, social and cultural contexts, the main stages of development, concepts, goals, objectives, authors of fiction films themes outlined above;
- classify and compare trends and stereotypes German films related to the Soviet/Russian theme: ideology, content model, genre modifications (including: socio-political analysis,
stereotypes, ideological analysis, identification analysis, the iconographic analysis, narrative analysis, the characters etc.).

**Cinematographic feature films stereotypes associated with Soviet / Russian theme and Soviet / Russian characters, set and published on the movie / TV screens in Federal Republic of Germany in the years 1946-1991, i.e. during the existence of the USSR Structure and genre stereotypes of dramas**

- **historical period, locale:** any length of time until 1992, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- **furnishings, household items:** a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters, comfortable home and everyday objects German characters and many of the characters of the Russian Empire. However, if the action takes place on the World War II or in the Soviet or Nazi camps, the living conditions of both Soviet and German characters quite ascetic;
- **methods of depicting reality:** moderately realistic (to a greater extent it concerns the image of Russia and Russian characters until 1917) or quasi-grotesque depiction of life in Russia and the USSR;
- **characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures:** positive characters - carriers of democratic ideas; negative characters - inhuman, militaristic ideas. Characters shared not only social, but often material status. Separated by ideology and worldview (bourgeois, communist, Nazi), characters, usually filed according to the settings of a media source: most Soviet and Nazis characters shown rude and cruel fanatics with a primitive vocabulary forever scowling faces, active gestures and unpleasant voices scream ... Characters of the Russian Empire or the Russian immigrants are often shown on the positive side. But some of the Soviet characters (e.g. prisoners of concentration camps) may also be shown on the positive side;
- **significant change in the lives of the characters:** the negative characters are going to put their inhumane ideas;
- **problems encountered:** the life of positive characters, or the life of entire nations / countries under threat;
- **finding solutions to the problem:** the struggle beatwen of negative and positive characters;
- **solution:** the destruction / arrest the negative characters, the return to civilian life.


**Structure and genre stereotypes of detectives and thrillers**

- **historical period, locale:** any length of time until 1992, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- **furnishings, household items:** a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters, luxury dwellings and household items Western characters (however, in the territory of the country hostile spies adapted to the housing and living conditions of the opponent);
- **methods of depicting reality:** as a rule, conditional grotesque depiction of the lives of people "hostile states".
- **characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures:** positive (border guards, counterintelligence, spies, civilians Germany) and negative (the same persons, but Soviet citizens or Nazi). Separated by ideology and worldview (bourgeois, communist, Nazi) characters tend to have a strong constitution and look according to the settings of a media source: Soviet spies may at some time look pretty, but then be sure to find its ugly essence. Soviet characters (border guards, heads of the KGB, etc.) are shown gross and cruel fanatics with a primitive vocabulary forever scowling faces, active gestures and unpleasant voices scream ... Significant change in the lives of the characters: the negative characters are committing a crime (illegal border crossing, sabotage, espionage, blackmail, theft of state secrets, murder);
- **problems encountered:** violation of the law;
- **finding solutions to problems:** crime investigation, prosecution negative characters;
- **solution:** positive characters expose / catch / destroy negative.

Specific examples of the movie: *The Spy* (1965), *Charlie Muffin* (1979), etc.
Structure and genre stereotypes of melodramatic films
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 1992, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters, comfortable home and everyday objects German characters.
- methods of depicting reality: as a rule, conditional grotesque in relation to the lives of people "hostile states".
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: male and female characters with contrasting ideological and social status. Characters tend to have slender physique and looks quite nice. Their clothing, language and facial expressions are "average" framework;
- significant change in the lives of the characters: a meeting of male and female characters;
- problems encountered: ideological and social mesalliance;
- finding solutions to the problem: the characters overcome the ideological and social obstacles to their love;
- solution: wedding / love harmony, or death, separation of these characters.
Representative examples of films: No Way Back (1953), etc.

Structure and genre stereotypes of comedy films
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 1992, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters, comfortable home and Houseware western characters;
- methods of depicting reality: as a rule, conditional grotesque in relation to the lives of people from "enemy states";
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: Soviet and Western characters with contrasting ideological and social status. They look as set sources of media texts: Soviet characters (unless of course they have not conceived flop to the West) are shown with vulgar fanatics primitive vocabulary forever scowling faces, active gestures and unpleasant tone of voice;
- significant change in the lives of the characters: the characters encountered in the funny / eccentric circumstances in this case, either Western or Soviet characters are on foreign soil;
- problems encountered: "culture shock", mutual misunderstanding.
- finding solutions to the problem: in a series of funny / eccentric characters situations overcome ideological barriers to understanding.
- solution: the harmony of understanding of Soviet and Western characters, colored humor.
Representative examples of films: Comrade Munchausen (1962), Two girls with red star (1966 ), etc.

Cinematographic feature films stereotypes associated with Soviet / Russian theme and Soviet / Russian characters, set and published on the movie / TV screens in Federal Republic of Germany in the years 1992-2014, i.e. after the collapse of the USSR
Structure and genre stereotypes of dramas
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 2014, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters, comfortable home and everyday objects German characters, many of the characters of the Russian Empire, Russian mafia oligarchs from post-Soviet period. However, if the action takes place on the World War II or in the Soviet and Nazi concentration camps, the living conditions of both Soviet and German characters quite ascetic.
- methods of depicting reality: moderately realistic (to a greater extent it concerns the image of Russia and Russian characters until 1917 ) or quasi- grotesque depiction of life in modern Russia and the USSR;
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: positive characters - carriers of democratic ideas; negative characters - inhuman, militaristic ideas. Characters shared not only social, but often material status, ideology, worldview (bourgeois, communist, Nazi). Characters of the Russian Empire or the Russian immigrants are often shown
on the positive side. Nazi characters are negative, Russian / Soviet characters are shown different - as rude and violent types with primitive vocabulary, spiteful persons active gestures and unpleasant tone of voice, and quite goodies protecting example civilians women and children. Soviet characters, such as concentration camp prisoners, may also be shown on the positive side. Characters of modern Russia (mostly - women) can be displayed positive if they are not connected with the secret police, mafia, crime;
- significant change in the lives of the characters: the negative characters are going to put their inhumane ideas;
- problems encountered: the life of positive characters, or the life of entire nations / countries under threat;
- finding solutions to the problem: the struggle between negative and positive characters;
- solution: the destruction / arrest the negative characters, the return to civilian life.


Structure and genre stereotypes of detectives and thrillers
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 2014, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet characters (or more is better, when it comes to modern Russia), luxury homes and Houseware western characters, Russian millionaires, mafia (in this case, if the movie characters spies, then, being on hostile territory of the country, they adapt to the housing and living conditions of the opponent);
- methods of depicting reality: as a rule, several grotesque depiction of life of people "hostile states";
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: positive (border guards, counterintelligence, spies, civilians Germany) and negative (the same persons, but the Soviet / Russian citizens, the Nazis). Separated by ideology and worldview (bourgeois, communist, Nazi) characters tend to have a strong constitution and look according to the settings of a media source: spyware may at any time to look pretty, but then be sure to find its ugly essence. Soviet characters (border guards, heads of the KGB, etc.) are shown gross and cruel fanatics with a primitive vocabulary forever scowling faces, active gestures and unpleasant voices scream... Russian characters are shown in a more differentiated.
- significant change in the lives of the characters: the negative characters are committing a crime (illegal border crossing, sabotage, espionage, blackmail, theft of state secrets, murder);
- problems encountered: violation of the law;
- finding solutions to problems: crime investigation, prosecution negative characters;
- solution: positive characters expose / catch / destroy negative.

Specific examples of the films: 23 (1998), etc.

Structure and genre stereotypes of melodramatic films
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 2014, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet / Russian characters, comfortable home and everyday objects German characters of Russian millioners, mafia;
- methods of depicting reality: as a rule, conditional grotesque in relation to the lives of people "hostile states";
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: male and female characters with contrasting ideological and social status. Characters tend to have slender physique and looks quite nice. Their clothing, language and facial expressions are "average" framework;
- significant change in the lives of the characters: a meeting of male and female characters;
- problems encountered: ideological and social mesalliance;
- finding solutions to the problem: the characters overcome the ideological and social obstacles to their love;
- solution: wedding / love harmony, or death, separation characters.

Representative examples of films: Love in Konigsberg (2006), Love in St. Petersburg (2009), etc.

**Structure and genre stereotypes of comedy films**
- historical period, locale: any length of time until 2014, Russia / USSR, DBR / DDR / Germany and other countries;
- furnishings, household items: a modest dwelling and household items Soviet / Russian characters, comfortable home and household items Western characters of Russian millioners, mafia;
- methods of depicting reality: as a rule, conditional grotesque in relation to the lives of people from "enemy states";
- characters, their values, ideas, clothes, physique, vocabulary, facial expressions, gestures: Soviet / Russian and Western characters with contrasting ideological and social status. They look as set sources of media texts: Soviet characters (unless of course they have not conceived flop to the West) are shown with vulgar fanatics primitive vocabulary forever scowling faces, active gestures and unpleasant tone of voice; Russian characters may look more differentiated;
- significant change in the lives of the characters: the characters encountered in the funny / eccentric circumstances in this case, either the German or Soviet / Russian characters are on foreign soil;
- problems encountered: "culture shock", mutual misunderstanding;
- finding solutions to the problem: in a series of funny / eccentric characters situations overcome ideological barriers to understanding;
- solution: understanding characters, colored humor.

Representative examples of films: The Gorilla Bathes at Noon (1993), Gate to Heaven (2003), etc.

My analysis of feature films related to the Soviet / Russian theme and Soviet / Russian characters, set in Germany / West Germany from 1953 to 2014 allowed us to construct a table 1.

**Table 1: German Feature Films on the Russian Subject (1946-2014)**
Compiled by Alexander Fedorov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of film release</th>
<th>Total number of German feature films associated with the Russian subject:</th>
<th>Films’ Genres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
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<td>1956</td>
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<td>1957</td>
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<td>1958</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1959</td>
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<td>1960</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
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<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of film release:</td>
<td>Total number of German feature films associated with the Russian subject:</td>
<td>Drama</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Films’ Genres**
Results.

As a result of analysis, I found that from 1953 to 2014 in the Federal Republic of Germany was photographed 148 feature films related to Russia and Russian characters. The first postwar German feature film with Russian characters was filmed in 1953.

60 feature films from 148 were co-production (with France, Italy, USA, Austria, Switzerland, and other countries), and 46 - the films adaptations of the Russian literary classics (prose and plays of Anton Chekhov, Fedor Dostoyevsky, Leon Tolstoy, Nikolai Gogol, Maxim Gorky, etc.).

As for the genre spectrum of these films, it is obvious dominant genre drama (86 films). Followed by (in descending order): comedy (23 films), detectives and thrillers (16 films), melodrama (12 films), action movies (9) and fiction films (2).

Only 88 from 148 of German films, associated with Soviet or Russian characters, talk about time period of 1940s – 1990s and the beginning of the XXI century. The following topics dominated in these 88 films:
- escape/emigration od Russian carecters to the West (11 films),
- espionage and terrorism (10 films),
- the Russian mafia, banditry, prostitution (10 films),
- the German characters suffering during the Second World War on the Eastern Front in the first half of the 1940s (7 films),
- the suffering of the German characters during the Soviet occupation of Germany in the second half of the 1940s (5 films),
- adventure of German characters caught in the Soviet Union or Russia during the 1960s to the present days.

Analyzing the figures, I can note a significant increase (at least 2.5 - fold) to the attention of German filmmakers of the Soviet / Russian theme in the post-Soviet era. So 66 films with Soviet and Russian characters was delivered in Germany for 45 five years after the war (1946 to 1991), and 82 films - in the last 22 years (1992-2014).

When saving dominant drama (39 dramas in the Soviet period and 47 - in the post-soviet) is clearly observed decline in the share of comedy films (16 comedies in the Soviet period to 7 - in the post-soviet) and an increase in the number of detectives, thrillers and action (in the Soviet period, these genres can be traced in the aggregate as the main in the 3 films only, whereas in the post-Soviet period - already in the 22 films).

148 feature films with the Soviet / Russian characters ... it much or little? Looking to compare. For example, in the U.S. during the Soviet period was delivered 242 films of this kind, and since 1992 – about 150. But – 148 films, it's about the same as it was filmed from 1946 to 2014 in France and Italy together...

Consequently, interest in Russian cinema topics in Germany accidental, and understandably so – the history of Russia and Germany are closely linked, including two world wars, where both sides were killed tens of millions of people.

As for the reasons for the increasing number of Russian films with themes - especially with modern – that over the past 20 years, then I would venture to hypothesize that it affected a significant inflow into Germany and Soviet Russian emigrants in it since 1992. Consequently, inside Germany itself today has considerable largest audience interested in films about Russia and Russian characters: from 82 million people residing in Germany, about 6 million in one degree or another fluent in Russian [Russian language ..., 2014].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Total (Russian period)</th>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<td>2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (Russian period)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contemporary German fiction cinema, associated with Soviet / Russian theme and Soviet / Russian characters, of course, gives a more stereoscopic and realistic image of Russia and Russian (see, for example, Love in Königsberg, England, Enemy at the Gates, Gate to Heaven, etc.). However, many German films 1992-2014's still pretty primitive approach inherent to the interpretation of events and characters associated with Russia (Russian Roulette - Moscow-95, Transsiberian, etc.).

References:


**Selected Filmography on the article topic**


**Solens barn. West Germany, 1969.** Director Ernst Gunther (play by M.Gorky). Actors Gunnel Brostrom, Ulf Brunnberg, Gertrud Fridh and others. Drama.


The story of the great Soviet composer Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) and his life and career during the rule of Stalin.


**Russian Roulette - Moscow 95. Germany, 1995.** Director Menahem Golan. Screenwriter Andrei Samsonov. Actors: Barbara Carrera, Zachi Noy, Oliver Reed, Maria Shukshina and others. Comedy.


**Along Came a Spider. USA-Germany-Canada, 2001.** Director Lee Tamahori. Screenwriter Marc Moss (novel by James Patterson). Actors: Morgan Freeman, Monica Potter, Michael Wincott, Ravil Isyanov and others. Thriller.

**Ice Planet. Germany, 2001.** Director Reiner Schone. Actors: Sab Shimono, James O'Shea, Valery Nikolaev and others. Sci-Fi.


**Zuckerbrot. Germany, 2003.** Director and screenwriter Hartmut Schoen. Actors: Florian Lukas, Marie Zielcke, Ivan Shvedov and others. Drama.

**Blindganger. Germany, 2004.** Director Bernd Sahling. Screenwriters: Helmut Dziuba, Bernd Sahling and others. Actors: Ricarda Ramunke, Dominique Horwitz, Maria Rother, Gennady Vengerov and others. Drama.


**Nachtasyl. Germany, 2005.** Director and screenwriter Hardi Strum (play by M. Gorky). Actors: Hans Peter Hallwachs, Esther Schweins, Wolfgang M. Bauer and others. Drama.


**Fay Grim. USA-Germany, 2006.** Director and screenwriter Hal Hartley. Actors: Parker Posey, D.J. Mendel, Liam Aiken and others. Thriller.


Извините, я не могу прочитать этот текст.